

# FIRST AVENUE SOUTH CORRIDOR

*The First Avenue South Corridor is located within the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing Industrial Center (MIC), abutting the Downtown Urban Center. Current zoning is Industrial Commercial (IC) with a 65' height limit. The area is also located within the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District and abuts the Pioneer Square Preservation District to the north.*

## EXISTING LAND USE CONTEXT

On the west side of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S., between Railroad Way S. and S. Royal Brougham Way, is the site of the former Washington Oregon Shipping Cooperative Association (WOSCA) warehouse. The 8.2-acre property is located immediately east of SR 99 and the Port's Terminal 46. Qwest Field is located one block to the east, separated by one block of properties within the Pioneer Square Preservation District that are zoned Pioneer Square Mixed (PSM). Safeco Field is located southeast of the area.

The western half of the property was acquired by the State of Washington for construction of the SR 99 tunnel project. The State is leasing the remaining portion of the property for construction staging purposes, and a potential option

for purchase is now under negotiation. The reconfigured SR 99 will impact this property through new surface and structured roadways, changes to parcel size and configuration, and the tunnel's alignment underground. Plans for the highway include a tunnel entrance located on the southern portion of the property. The portion of the tunnel in this area is cut-and-cover construction, and is not planned to accommodate the weight of future buildings at this time.

Under provisions of the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District, development is allowed up to 3.0 FAR (floor area ratio) for permitted non-residential uses. An additional 75,000 square feet of street level retail use is exempt from the FAR limit to encourage pedestrian-oriented development that would complement the regional sports and entertainment uses associated with Safeco and Qwest Fields and the Qwest Exhibition Center. Additional development standards apply to add to the pedestrian-friendly environment.

Historically, First Avenue South served industrial activity associated with the Port of Seattle. Construction of the viaduct/SR99 and the removal of rail service interrupted this relationship and led to changes in how inland areas functioned, including stadium development and mixed use activity in Pioneer Square. Proposed amendments are intended to help integrate the area and future development with the surrounding Pioneer Square and Stadium neighborhoods.



## OBJECTIVES FOR FUTURE LAND USE

1. Support a transition between nearby industrial uses, the Pioneer Square neighborhood and stadium and entertainment uses.
2. Improve the pedestrian experience along First Avenue South.
3. Allow light-industrial, research and development, commercial, and office uses; while prohibiting residential uses that may be negatively impacted by nearby industrial activities.
4. Allow additional height and floor area gained through voluntary participation in bonus and TDR programs, with provisions to retain compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.
5. Direct density and bulk away from the First Avenue South/South Royal Brougham Way intersection in order to minimize impacts to freight networks in this area.

## ZONING CONSIDERATIONS

The Comprehensive Plan encourages the retention of industrial zoning in areas located within Seattle's Manufacturing and Industrial Centers (MIC). A discussion of the Comprehensive Plan policies for the Greater Duwamish MIC can be found at [www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/IndustrialLands](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/IndustrialLands). Throughout the Livable South Downtown planning process, residents and business people expressed diverse opinions as to the future of this area. Opinions ranged from retaining existing industrial-commercial zoning, to allowing residential uses at the northern edge of the WOSCA property near Pioneer Square.

## LAND USE OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

The First Avenue South corridor is recommended to retain an employment focus, allowing for office and light industrial uses that would complement and remain compatible with other nearby uses. The Livable South Downtown Environmental Impact Statement identified potential conflicts between residential uses and existing and future industrial activities. Examples of impacts include noise and light and glare from nearby Terminal 46; railroad activity and SR 99 traffic and construction; air pollutants; and freight traffic.

## Description of Proposed Zoning: Industrial-Commercial 65'-160' (IC 65-160)

The west side of the First Avenue South corridor north of S. Royal Brougham Way is proposed to retain Industrial Commercial (IC) zoning with a height limit of 65 feet. In the proposed Industrial-Commercial 65-160 zone, the permitted increase in height and FAR is allowed only for development above base development capacity. Development standards will promote compatibility between the density and scale of new development in the area and the historic scale and character of Pioneer Square.

Proposed standards are also intended to provide for a transition between the Downtown Urban Center and the Duwamish MIC. On lots with unusually long street frontages, required spacing between structures would promote building massing on the site similar to development conditions on typical Pioneer Square blocks.

In addition, certain streets are identified as being critical to the network of pedestrian connections within the area. These streets abut the Downtown Urban Center boundary. Other identified streets are proposed to be included in the Industrial Streets Landscaping Plan Map.

## Proposed Heights

- The existing 65 foot height limit would be retained as a base height limit.
- A maximum structure height of 160 feet would be allowed only for projects electing to add floor area above the base FAR by participating in the incentive zoning program

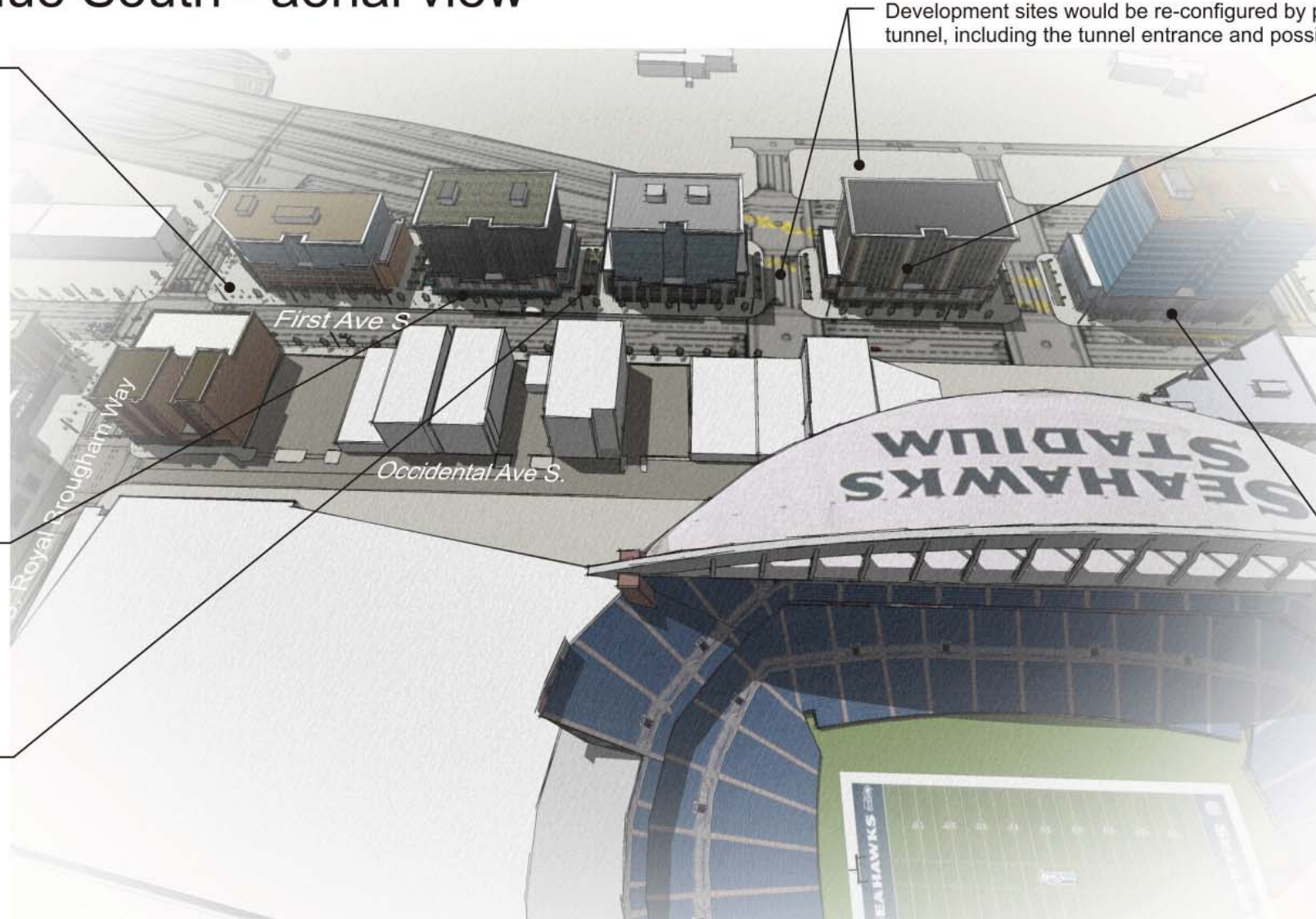
## First Avenue South - aerial view

Plaza at the corner of S. Royal Brougham Way and First Avenue South will accommodate large volumes of pedestrians.

Seattle Green Factor requirement of .3 will encourage landscaping and natural drainage features

Pedestrian-oriented uses required at street level

Required separation between buildings will provide opportunities for open spaces and access to light



Development sites would be re-configured by plans for the Alaskan Way tunnel, including the tunnel entrance and possible new surface streets

Building over the cut-and-cover portion of the tunnel may not be possible, depending upon final tunnel design. Additionally, some land will be devoted to tunnel-related services (not depicted here).

Facade design requirements will ensure pedestrian scale and orientation of buildings to complement areas within Pioneer Square and the stadium district.

This depiction is presented for illustration purposes only. White structures depict existing buildings

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and complying with additional conditions. For buildings exceeding 125 feet in height, there is a limit proposed on the average size of floors above 85 feet in height.

- Structure height would be limited to 85 feet in the southernmost portion of the First Avenue South Corridor area within 240 feet of Royal Brougham Way S.

### Proposed Floor Area Limits

- Retain the current 3 FAR limit and the exemption of 75,000 square feet of street level uses, as a base density limit. Projects not exceeding the base limit would be subject to existing IC zone development standards and the Stadium Transition Overlay District (SMC Chapter 23.74).
- Allow up to 5 FAR through participation in incentive zoning programs and to special development conditions and standards that address the impacts of added height and density.

### Conditions for exceeding base development capacity

- Participate in incentive zoning program
- Comply with the standards in Downtown zones for maximum limits on parking
- Comply with street-level use requirements
- Meet bulk and density standards, and standards for street-level design, upper level development, and location and screening of parking.

- Meet LEED Silver standards, in recognition of the greater environmental impact of larger buildings
- Provide open space consistent with a determination of the project's impacts

### Relationship to the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District Requirements

Within the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District, regulations are intended to complement stadium activities and the adjacent Pioneer Square neighborhood by encouraging retail at street-level within a pedestrian-oriented environment. In the proposed IC 65-160 zone, projects that do not exceed base development capacity would continue to be subject to these standards.

The existing overlay district requirements do not, however, contemplate the possibility of larger buildings in the area. For this reason, new standards that address streetscape, uses, and building form are proposed, consistent with the intent of the overlay district, in order to mitigate the impacts of increased height and density. Buildings that exceed 3 FAR would be subject to provisions similar to those that apply to larger, more complex projects elsewhere downtown and within the IC zone in the South Lake Union Urban Center. These include the following:

### Floor area exemptions—bonus projects

- Parking above grade, if the Director concludes that conditions such as a high water table, the presence of tunnels below grade, or contaminated soils prohibit the location of parking below grade;

- Wind generators and solar collectors on rooftops; and
- Pedestrian-oriented street level use requirements similar to those that apply in some Downtown zones.

### Use Provisions

Most uses currently permitted under existing zoning would continue to be allowed. However, accessory surface parking would be prohibited, and principal use parking in developments electing to exceed the base FAR would be prohibited. Residential uses would continue to be prohibited.

Currently, the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District allows up to 75,000 square feet of certain street level uses to be exempt from floor area calculations in the IC zone to encourage pedestrian-oriented retail activity. This would continue to apply to development that does not exceed base development capacity.

Under proposed zoning, within projects electing to build according to incentive zoning provisions, certain uses are required for portions of the street-level facade along identified pedestrian streets. These uses include general sales and service, eating and drinking establishments, and entertainment uses. Floor area accommodating required street level uses would be exempted from FAR calculations.

Additionally, general sales and service uses and major durables retail sales uses are subject to a maximum size limit of 30,000 square feet in order to encourage moderate-size retail spaces that complement the pedestrian environment.

## WOSCA - 1st Ave S. & S. Royal Brougham Way

Allow the following heights:

- up to 65' generally
- up to 160' through incentive zoning provisions
- up to 85' through incentive zoning within 240' of S. Royal Brougham Way

Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement depicted

Only non-residential uses permitted in the IC zone, with additional allow:

- up to 3.0 FAR, with additional allowance for pedestrian-oriented street-level uses
- up to 5.0 FAR through incentive zoning



Existing heights:  
• Qwest Field 263'

• Pioneer Square Mixed zone allows up to 120' East of First Avenue S.

• Silver Cloud Hotel is 85' and 75'

Existing Stadium Transition Overlay standards will help ensure future development that complements both Pioneer Square and the stadium district.

*This depiction is presented for illustration purposes only. White structures depict existing buildings*

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## Design Review

Design review is currently required for development exceeding 120 feet in width on any street frontage in the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District. In addition to this requirement, design review is proposed to apply to development projects participation in the incentive zoning program with more than 12,000 square feet of non-residential gross floor area. The 12,000 square foot threshold for design review is consistent with provisions for design review that apply to IC zones in the South Lake Union Urban Center.

## Regulating Form and Design for Projects Subject to Incentive Zoning Program

Proposed development standards address potential increases in height and density on sites that are up to one quarter of a mile in length, the current length of the WOSCA site north-south. Projects meeting criteria for participation in the incentive zoning program would be subject to standards that address the following elements:

- Street façades, including minimum façade height, façade setbacks at street level, maximum façade widths on lots with frontage on a street that exceeds 400 feet, and pedestrian entrances;
- Façade modulation for upper levels and, for buildings exceeding 125 feet in height, a limit on the average floor size for all stories above 85 feet in height;
- Façade transparency and blank walls; and
- Screening and location of parking.

## Street Façade Requirements- projects exceeding base FAR

*Façade height.* The minimum height of a street façade is proposed to be 50 feet, is consistent with the minimum height requirement that applies in the abutting zone in the Pioneer Square Preservation District. Currently, a minimum façade height of 25 feet applies throughout the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District.

*Façade setbacks.* To maintain continuous street walls characteristic of development in Pioneer Square, at least 75 percent of the street façade of a new structure that uses incentive zoning provisions would be required to be built within two feet of the street lot line. To allow for some variety in the treatment of the street frontage, the remaining 25 percent may set back up to 10 feet from the street lot line. The proposal also accounts for conditions that might prevent a structure from abutting the street, such as a sidewalk widening or the presence of a utility easement, in which case the setback may be measured from a line that provides an appropriate substitute for the street lot line.

*Maximum structure width.* A limit on structure width for projects that use incentive zoning provisions is intended to promote development massing that reflects conditions in Pioneer Square, where developed block frontages are typically 240 feet in length. On lots that have a street frontage of 400 feet or more, proposed amendments would limit the maximum width of structures to 240 feet, measured parallel to 1st Avenue South, and require separation between a structure built to the maximum width and another structure on the lot. The required separation area must be provided at ground level and open to the sky. The area would be al-





lowed to be used for landscaping, vehicular or pedestrian access to structures, and amenity areas for project occupants.

*Principal pedestrian entrances.* Similar to the current requirements of the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District, a principal pedestrian entrance is required for facades facing streets that are identified as pedestrian streets. These streets include First Avenue South and Railroad Way South, both streets that abut the Downtown Urban Center and Pioneer Square, and South Royal Brougham Way. The segment of South Royal Brougham Way abutting the site west of 1st Avenue S. is proposed to be added to the Industrial Streets Landscaping Plan, consistent with its role in the pedestrian network in an industrial area.

*Modulation.* A modulation requirement is proposed for structures exceeding 85 feet in height. This standard will promote architectural variation and create visual interest for exterior walls along First Avenue South. The modulation requirement would only apply to portions of facades within 15 feet of a street property line on floors above 65 feet in height. Under the proposal, a street-facing façade less than 15 feet from the street property line would only be allowed to extend a maximum of 120 feet without modulation. To extend beyond 120 feet, the façade would have to “break” by setting back a minimum of 10 feet from the property line for a minimum distance of 20 feet measured parallel to the street.

*Average floor area limit.* For structures exceeding 125 feet in height, the average gross floor area of all floors above 85 feet in height would be limited to a maximum of 20,000 square feet.

*Façade Transparency Requirements and Blank Façade Limits.* Standards for façade transparency and blank façades that apply in Downtown zones are incorporated in the pro-

posed amendments for projects that participate in incentive zoning provisions to provide visual interest for pedestrians and to integrate the street level portions of a development with the public street environment.

Provisions for transparency require a percentage of the street level portion of a street façade to include windows. Sixty per cent of the façade frontages on identified pedestrian streets are required to provide transparency, and blank facades are proposed to be limited to 15 feet in length. Where less pedestrian activity is anticipated, transparency is required for 30% of the street level façade, and blank facades generally may not exceed 30 feet. Under the proposed amendments, enclosed parking at street level on these frontages would not be subject to a transparency requirement, but must comply with special screening requirements.

## Parking Provisions

*Parking Quantity.* The Stadium Transition Area Overlay District establishes a maximum limit on parking that permits one space for each 650 square feet of floor area. The proposed amendments reflect the high degree of transit access in this area, allowing no more parking than one space for every 1,000 square feet of floor area.

*Screening of Parking.* Because of a high water table in this former tidelands area, with soils that are often contaminated from previous industrial uses, and in anticipation of the presence of the tunnel below grade replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct, it may be economically prohibitive to provide parking below grade. The following measures address the potential impacts of street level parking on the character of the streetscape and the visual impacts of above-grade parking:



*Parking at street level.* Along designated pedestrian streets, parking at street level in a structure would be required to be separated from the street by another use. Parking would be required to be screened along other street frontages and lot lines that do not abut a street. Parking at street level abutting the required separation area between structures on lots with street frontages of 400 feet or more would be required to be separated from the separation area by another use for 30 percent of its length.

*Parking above street level.* On lots with depths greater than 150 feet, parking located on floors above street level would be required to be separated from the street by another use. On other lot lines, separation of parking by another use, both at and above street level, would not be required. However, parking would be required to be screened from view in a manner that is visually interesting and integrates the parking levels as part of the overall design of the structure.

Proposed provisions for screening of parking are similar to those that currently apply under the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District. However, they also include standards similar to those that apply in Downtown zones on both Class I and Class II pedestrian streets.

Summary of Base and Maximum Development Provisions

IC 65-160 Zone	Base Development	Maximum Development Development above base is an option for projects that participate in the incentive zoning program.
Height	65 feet	85 feet within 240 feet of S. Royal Brougham Way; 160 feet in the area located more than 240 feet north of S. Royal Brougham Way.
FAR	3.0 FAR; with exemption for 75,000 square feet of specified street-level uses.	5.0 FAR; with exemption for specified street-level uses
Applicable Development Standards	Existing IC and Stadium Transition Overlay standards apply.	Substitute development standards would apply to address increased bulk and density allowed. Standards would apply to façade design, screening of parking and bulk controls.